

Intro to GForge

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Overview

GForge is an open-source collaboration website. It has many different features, all aimed at helping project teams deliver and support software. For DAS-ITE users and customers, it includes a replacement for our existing Bugzilla and CVS services.

The website at forge.iowa.gov is available from the Internet, so external customers or home users can reach the information at any time. Many features are integrated with e-mail – notices are sent to the right people when bugs are entered or cleared, or when items are re-assigned. Almost everything is stored in the GForge database, making support tickets, bugs, feature requests, and forums conversations searchable with one click.

The GForge product was originally a "fork" (separate copy) of the website used by SourceForge. While these two sets of code have changed dramatically over the past few years, it is important to note that SourceForge hosts hundreds of thousands of projects for even more users in a server farm layout. GForge is equally scalable, and currently has hundreds of privately and publicly-installed sites, serving almost 9,000 projects to over 235,000 users.

Motivations / Key Benefits

We've made some great improvements in our SDLC and PM processes over the past few years. In particular, the introduction of version control and bug tracking has made it much easier to plan and support software projects. Of course, nothing is perfect, and we've started to run up against these types of issues:

- Some customers want a "private" instance of CVS to which they control access.
- There's no web-based access control for CVS.
- There's no good way to tie Bugzilla logons to CVS logons.
- All Bugzilla projects are searchable, and any logged-in user can submit a bug to any project.
- We fit support tickets, feature requests and even some tasks into Bugzilla. The BZ process doesn't always accommodate these things very well.
- We often use Bugzilla bugs to host discussions that aren't necessarily bug-related.
- Bugzilla is not available over the Internet.
- Many customers find it difficult to use TortoiseCVS or the CVS web interface just to get documents for review.

GForge solves these issues by integrating many software development tools under a single logon per user. It also allows for varying levels of access per user for each project.

Here are some other benefits:

- GForge allows multiple types of trackers – one example is bugs, but projects can also have support tickets, feature requests, risks/issues, and anything else that the customer wants.
- We have integrated GForge with Enterprise A&A for user account management. Your ENTAA account gets you into GForge just like it did for Bugzilla.
- GForge also has forums for creating discussions on various topics, such as developer questions or ideas, user requirements, testing information, customer service or end-user chat.
- GForge supports customizable mailing lists for each project.
- The CVS version control system is viewable over the web, within the project's GForge website.

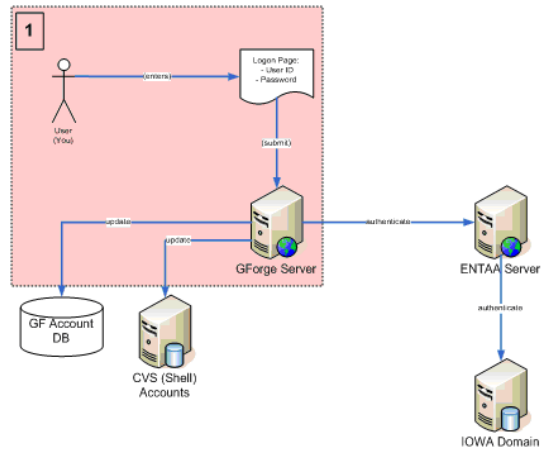
Regarding Passwords and CVS

While GForge allows you to use your desktop credentials for all system functions (including CVS access), it doesn't happen by magic.

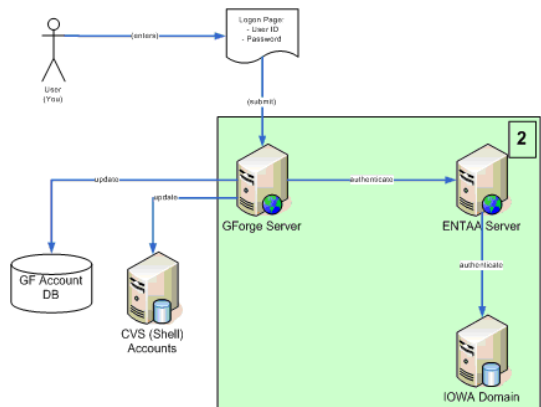
Here's how GForge handles user information during the logon process:

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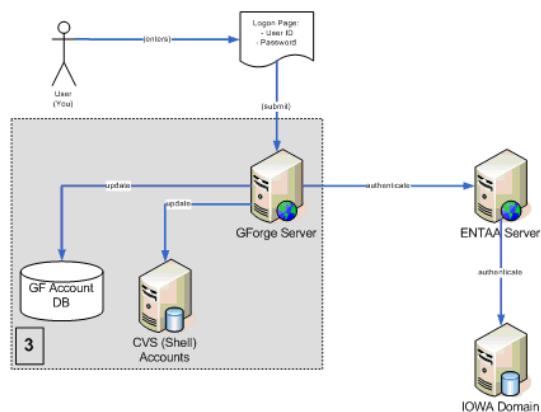
1. The user goes to the logon page and enters their ENTAA user ID and password.



2. The GForge server checks the credentials against the ENTAA service, which uses the Iowa Domain as its account base



3. If the authentication succeeds, the GForge server updates or creates the user account in its own database. This means that users who have never been to GForge can log on immediately and apply for access to projects. In a background process every few minutes, GForge also synchronizes its password with the "shell" account that is used for CVS access.



Next: [Getting Started](#)